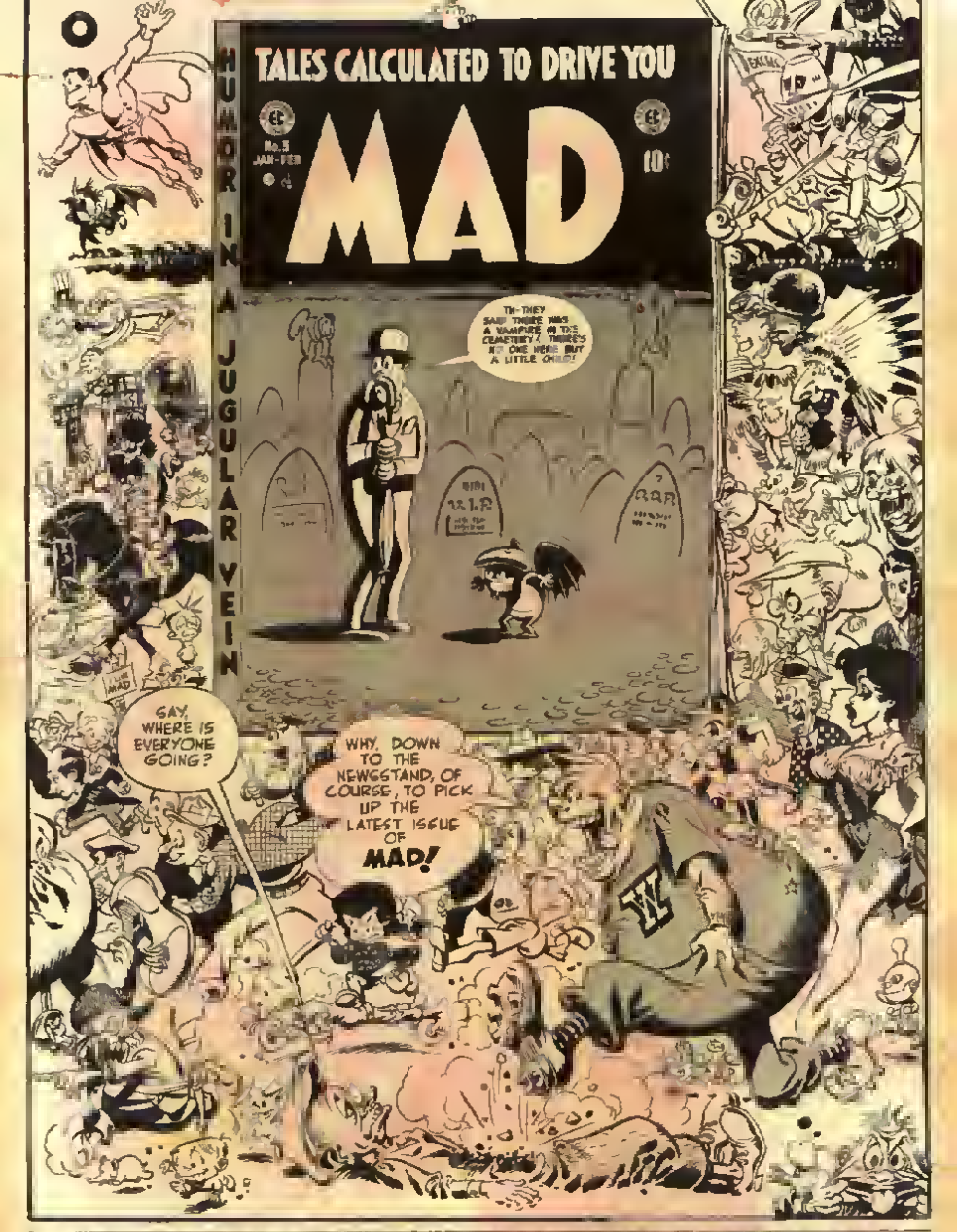
HORROR
AN ENTERTAINING COMIC
NO. 29
FEB.-MAR.
THE VAULT OF
HORROR
10¢
FEATURING...
THE VAULT-KEEPER
THE OLD WITCH
THE CRYPT-KEEPER
JOHNNY CRAIG
IN THIS ISSUE:
E.C.'S ADAPTATION OF A STORY BY
RAY BRADBURY
AMERICA'S TOP HORROR WRITER!



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THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! WELL, IT'S TIME FOR ANOTHER *TERRIFYING* TALE FROM MY COLLECTION HERE IN THE DARK AND GLOOMY *VAULT OF HORROR*...AND, AS ALWAYS, I'VE SELECTED A REAL *GINGER-PEACHY* ONE FOR YOUR *FIENDISH* PLEASURES! DO YOU BELIEVE IN *HAUNTED HOUSES*? EVER WONDER *WHY* OR *HOW* THEY GET THAT WAY? WELL, IF YOU PROMISE NOT TO BECOME *TOO* FRIGHTENED, I'LL TELL YOU! HERE IT IS, THE TALE CALLED... *THE*

MAUSOLEUM!

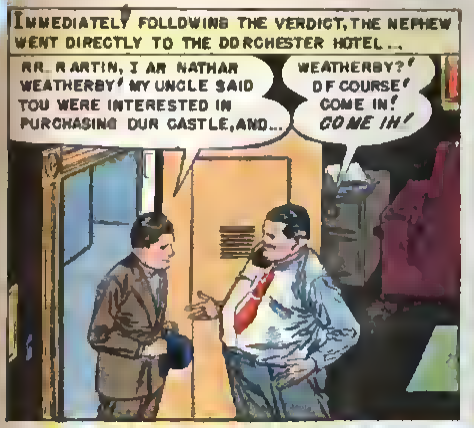
THE WIND HOWLED ACROSS THE BLEAK ENGLISH MOORS, WHIPPING THE MAN'S COAT-TAILS, LASHING THE ROCKY COUNTRYSIDE WITH STINGING FURY! AN ETERNAL MIST CLUNG TO THE GROUND, AND FINE SPRAY SATURATED THE AIR WITH EXCESSIVE MOISTURE! FROM BEYOND THE JAGGED CLIFFS HE COULD HEAR THE BOOMING SURF, AND HE WATCHED THE MONOTONOUS SOARING OF THE HAWKS HIGH ABOVE! HE WAS DEFINITELY PLEASED.

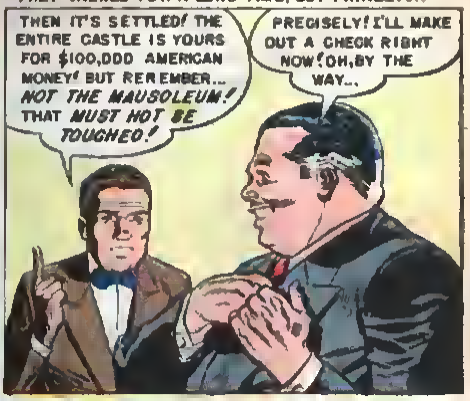
JOHNNY CRAIG

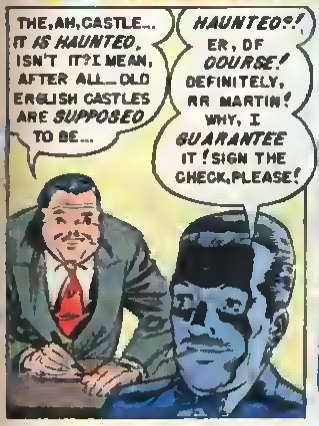
THE MAN SMILED BROADLY AND WALKED BRISKLY ALONG THE ROAD UNTIL HE ARRIVED AT THE DOOR TO THE CASTLE! HE KNOCKED...
YES...?
HOW DO YOU DO? MY NAME IS MARTIN! HOWARD MARTIN! I'D LIKE TO SPEAK TO THE OWNER OF THIS CASTLE!
I OWN THIS CASTLE! NAME IS WEATHERBY!
JUST THE MAN I WANT TO SEE! MAY I COME IN?
THEIR STEPS ECHOED AGAIN AND AGAIN FROM THE STONE CORRIDOR WALLS AS THE DODDERING MR. WEATHERBY LED THE WAY TO THE LIBRARY...
THIS... THIS PLACE IS MAGNIFICENT!
THANK YOU, SIR! IT HAS QUITE A HISTORY! PLEASE SIT DOWN.
MR. WEATHERBY, I CAME HERE FROM THE UNITED STATES TO FIND A CASTLE JUST LIKE THIS ONE! I WANT TO BUY IT, AND YOU CAN SET THE PRICE!
I'M FLATTERED, MR. MARTIN! THAT IS, INDEED, A FINE OFFER!
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO LIVE IN A PLACE LIKE THIS! IT ...IT FASCINATES ME! I'M GOING TO HAVE EVERY BIT OF IT TRANSPORTED TO THE STATES AND REBUILD IT JUST...
BUT, MR. MARTIN! I'M AFRAID THE CASTLE IS NOT FOR SALE!
EH? BUT WHY NOT?! I SAID I'D PAY ANYTHING YOU ASK! I WANT THIS CASTLE! PRICE IS NO OBJECT! JUST NAME IT! I'M VERY WEALTHY! I...
MR. MARTIN, THIS CASTLE HAS BEEN IN OUR FAMILY FOR CENTURIES! I'D NEVER SELL IT!
NOW, DON'T BE HASTY! THINK IT OVER! HERE'S MY CARD! IF...
I'M SORRY, MR. MARTIN! THE DECISION STANDS! THIS CASTLE IS NOT FOR SALE! GOOD-DAY!
2

WELL, MR WEATHERBY, YOU HAVE MY CANO! I EXPECT TO REMAIN IN LONDON FOR A FEW MORE WEEKS, SO...
GOOO-OAY, MR. MARTIN!
SLAM
UNCLE! HAVE YOU GONE MAD?! A CHANCE LIKE THAT ONLY COMES ONCE IN A LIFE-TIME!
NEPHEW, MIND YOUR MANNERS! WHILE I'M HEAD OF THIS HOUSE, THE CASTLE SHALL STAY INTACT!
BUT YOU KNOW WE CAN'T PAY THE TAXES! WE'RE BROKE! YOU MUST SELL THE CASTLE!
NEPHEW, PLEASE! THE CASTLE WILL NOT BE SOLD!
I WON'T LET YOU DO IT! YOU'LL DIE SOON - AND ALL THE DEBTS WILL BE ON MY SHOULDERS! WHAT ABOUT ME? WHAT ABOUT ME?!
STOP! STOP SHAKING ME!
I'M NOT GOING TO ROT IN THIS CREEPY PLACE! THIS IS MY CHANCE TO GET OUT FROM UNDER, AND YOU'RE NOT GOING TO SPOIL IT!
NEPHEW! PLEASE! WAIT! WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH...
THE BLOW SPLIT MR. WEATHERBY'S HEAD WIDE OPEN AND HE FELL HEAVILY TO THE STONE FLOOR! THE NEPHEW RELEASED HIS GRIP ON THE WEAPON AND KNELT BESIDE THE BLOOD-COVERED BODY OF THE LITTLE OLD MAN! HE RUMAGED QUICKLY THROUGH THE POCKETS...
AH! HERE IT IS! 'HOWARD MARTIN DORCHESTER HOTEL, LONDON!'
3

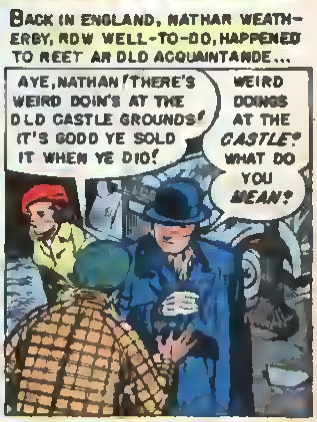
THE YOUNG MAN LIFTED HIS UNCLE'S BODY TO HIS SHOULDERS AND CARRIED HIM OUTSIDE TO A SMALL BUILDING ... THE FAMILY MAUSOLEUM!
...SAFEST PLACE! THEY'LL NEVER THINK TO LOOK FOR HIM THERE!
WITH A KEY FROM THE OLD MAN'S POCKET, HE OPENED THE HUGE IRON DOORS AND BROUGHT THE CORPSE INSIDE! HE OPENED ONE OF THE ORNATE COFFINS ..
PWEW!.. THIS PLACE STINKS! NOW TO SHOVE HIM IN! GASP!
QUICKLY, HE CLOSED THE COFFIN-LID AND LEFT THE MAUSOLEUM! HE MADE CERTAIN THE DOOR WAS LOCKED.. THEN ENTERED THE CASTLE AND CLEANED AWAY THE ACCUSING BLOOD!
THERE! I'LL PUT THIS THING BACK WHERE I GOT IT, AND THEN...
HEH, HEH, HEH! GUESS YOU COULD SAY OLD MR. WEATHERBY HAD A SPLIT-PERSONALITY! ANYWAY THE NEPHEW TOOK ONE OF HIS UNCLE'S HATS, AND TOSSED IT INTO A QUICKSAND BOG, A SHORT WAY FROM THE CASTLE! THEN HE RACED TO THE POLICE STATION IN THE VILLAGE...
TRY TO CALM YOURSELF, MR. WEATHERBY! TELL US JUST WHAT HAPPENED!
IT'S HORRIBLE! MY UNCLE AND I WERE OUT WALKING...THROUGH THE BOGS! THEN SUDDENLY, HE TRIPPED AND FELL FROM THE PATH...INTO THE QUICKSAND! HE... HE'S GONE!
NATURALLY, THERE WAS AN INVESTIGATION! THEY TRIED GRAPPLING FOR THE BODY, BUT THEY NEVER FOUND IT! THEY ONLY FOUND THE UNCLE'S HAT...
SORRY, MR. WEATHERBY, BUT IT'S HOPELESS! WE HAVE TO GIVE IT UP!
..WOULDN'T HAVE GOT THE HAT, EXCEPT THAT IT WAS TOO LIGHT TO SINK!
NO BODY...NO MURDER! THE INQUEST WAS BRIEF...
...AND IN VIEW OF THE EVIDENCE, OR LACK OF IT.. WE DECLARE CORNELIUS WEATHERBY LEGALLY DEAD, AND HEREBY STATE THAT THE CAUSE OF HIS DEATH WAS ACCIDENTAL DUE TO...
HA, HA, HA, HA!


IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE VERDICT, THE NEPHEW WENT DIRECTLY TO THE DORCHESTER HOTEL...
RR. RARTIN, I AR NATHAR WEATHERBY! MY UNCLE SAID TOU WERE INTERESTED IN PURCHASING DUR CASTLE, AND...
WEATHERBY?! DF COURSE! COME IN! COME IN!

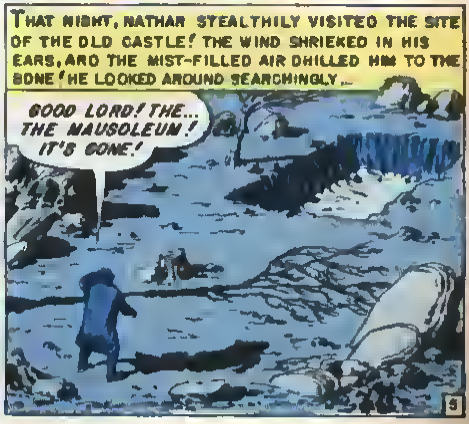

THEY TALKED FDR A LONG TIME, BUT FINALLY...
THEN IT'S SETTLED! THE ENTIRE CASTLE IS YOURS FOR $100,DDD AMERICAN MONEY! BUT REREMBER... NOT THE MAUSOLEUM! THAT MUST HOT BE TOUCHED!
PRECISELY! I'LL MAKE OUT A CHECK RIGHT NOW! OH, BY THE WAY...


THE, AH, CASTLE... IT IS HAUNTED, ISN'T IT? I MEAN, AFTER ALL... OLD ERGLISH CASTLES ARE SUPPOSED TO BE...
HAUNTED?! ER, DF COURSE! DEFINITELY, RR MARTIN! WHY, I GUARANTEE IT! SIGN THE CHECK, PLEASE!

AND SD, THE CASTLE WAS TORN DOWN STONE BY STDRE, SHIPPED TO AMERICA, AND THERE, STONE BY STONE, IT WAS REBUILT...


BACK IN ENGLAND, NATHAR WEATHERBY, RDW WELL-TO-DO, HAPPENED TO REET AR DLD ACQUAINTANDE...
AYE, NATHAN! THERE'S WEIRD DOIN'S AT THE DLD CASTLE GROUNDS! IT'S GDDD YE SOLD IT WHEN YE DID!
WEIRD DOINGS AT THE CASTLE? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

NO ONE DARES GO NEAR SINCE YE LEFT! EVERY NIGHT, THEY TELL DF THE WAILS ARD AWFUL MOANIN' SOUNDS THAT COME FROM THE MAUSOLEUM!
WHA..? THE MAUSOLEUM?! GDDD HEAVENS! I'D BETTER INVESTIGATE!


THAT NIGHT, NATHAR STEALTHILY VISITED THE SITE OF THE DLD CASTLE! THE WIND SHRIEKED IN HIS EARS, ARD THE MIST-FILLED AIR CHILLED HIM TO THE BONE! HE LOOKED AROUND SEARCHINGLY...
GOOD LORD! THE... THE MAUSOLEUM! IT'S GONE!

SEVERAL HOURS LATER, A TRANS-CONTINENTAL PLANE SPED THROUGH THE EBONY SKY TOWARD AMERICA!

BLASTED *IDIOT!* I DISTINCTLY *TOLD* HIM *NOT* TO TOUCH THAT *MAUSOLEUM!* IF ANYONE OPENS THAT COFFIN...

AND IN AMERICA, MR. MARTIN JOYFULLY CRAWLED INTO BED TO SPEND HIS FIRST NIGHT IN THE CASTLE...

AH! THIS IS THE LIFE! EH? WHAT'RE THOSE NOISES?

CURIOUS, HE SLIPPED ON A ROBE AND PEERED OUT HIS WINDOW...

SOUNDS LIKE IT'S COMING FROM THE SANDER! I..

GOOD LORD!

SHOCKED, YET ENTRANCED, HE CLUTCHED HIS ROBE TIGHTER AS HE WATCHED THE GRISLY SIGHT THAT UNFOLDED BEFORE HIS EYES! THERE ON THE LAWN, ILLUMINATED BY THE EERIE, COLD-BLUE MOONLIGHT, A HALF-DOZEN 'CREATURES' WERE *REBUILDING THE ANCIENT MAUSOLEUM!*

THEIR BODIES WERE ROTTED AND DECAYED! SOME WERE NOTHING MORE THAN SKELETONS, AND CHUNKS OF SKIN SEEMED TO FALL FROM THEIR FRAMES AS THEY WORKED... YET EACH WAS EXCEPTIONALLY STRONG FOR THEY CARRIED THE STONE BLOCKS WITH EASE!

I...I CAN'T *BELIEVE* IT! IT'S...IT'S SO *HORRIBLE*, BUT... *FASCINATING!* THE CASTLE *REALLY IS HAUNTED!*

HE WATCHED IN AWE FOR UNTOLD HOURS AS THE SMALL BUILDING GRADUALLY TOOK SHAPE! INTO THE SMALL HOURS OF MORNING THEY WORKED... EFFICIENTLY... SILENTLY! MR. MARTIN REMAINED AWARE AS LONG AS HE COULD... BUT FINALLY HE FELL ASLEEP AT THE WINDOW!

HE AWOKE WITH A START! THE WARM SUN STREAMED INTO THE ROOM AND THE TWITTERING OF BIRDS MET HIS EARS! THE GARDEN WAS SILENT AND DESERTED! BUT THE COMPLETED MAUSOLEUM STOOD... MUTE TESTIMONY TO THE EVENT HE HAD WITNESSED!

I...I THOUGHT I HAD BEEN *DREAMING!* BUT IT WAS *TRUE!* IT WAS *TRUE!*

HURRIEDLY, HE MADE FOR THE GARDEN! THE MAUSOLEUM STILL REMAINED...OMINOUS... FORBODING...

IT'S REAL! IT'S REAL! HOW WONDERFUL!

HE EXAMINED THE SMALL BUILDING CAREFULLY! FRONT AND REAR... AND ALL AROUND THE GENERAL AREA!

CONFOUND IT! NOT A TRACE OF THOSE... THOSE THINGS! EVEN THE DOOR'S LOCKED! I WONDER IF THEY'RE INSIDE?

BLAST IT! WHY DID I HAVE TO FALL ASLEEP WHEN I DID? I MISSED THE BEST PART!

...ONLY ONE THING TO DO! I'LL WATCH AGAIN TONIGHT! MAYBE I'LL SEE THEM ONCE MORE!

BUT MR. MARTIN WASN'T THE ONLY ONE INTERESTED IN THE MAUSOLEUM! THAT NIGHT, NATHAN WEATHERBY SCALED THE WALL SURROUNDING THE ESTATE...

THERE'S THE CASTLE! THE MAUSOLEUM SHOULD BE RIGHT BEHIND IT!

AND IN HIS WINDOW, MR. MARTIN WATCHED...

...NOTHING HAPPENED YET! GOOD THING I SLEPT ALL DAY! I WON'T MISS ANYTHING TONIGHT!

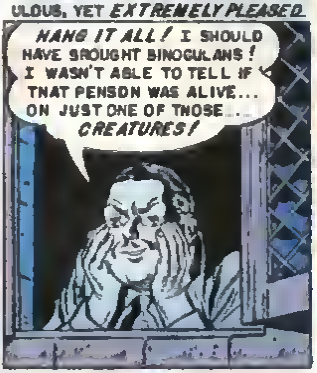
AH! WHAT'S THAT?

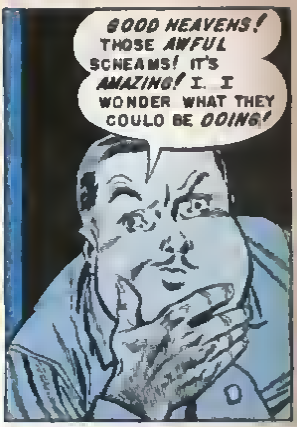
UNAWARE THAT HE WAS BEING WATCHED, NATHAN FURTIVELY SNEAKED ACROSS THE LAWN TO THE MAUSOLEUM. AS HE CONFRONTED IT, HE STOPPED, HIS EYES BULGING FROM THEIR SOCKETS IN HORROR.

THE...THE DOOR! IT'S... IT'S OPENING!

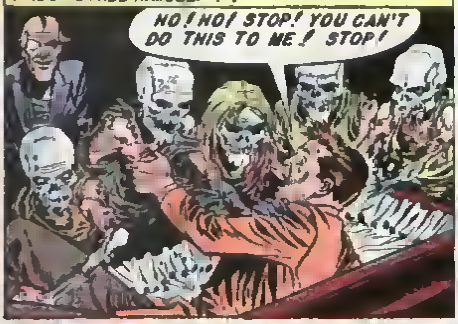
TRANSFIXED IN TERROR, HE COULD NOT EVADE THE CLUTCHING, WITHERED ARM THAT EXTENDED FROM THE INKY BLACKNESS AND SNATCHED HIM INSIDE...

IMMEDIATELY, THE IRON DOOR SLAMMED SHUT! MR. MANTIN WAS INCREDULOUS, YET *EXTREMELY PLEASED*

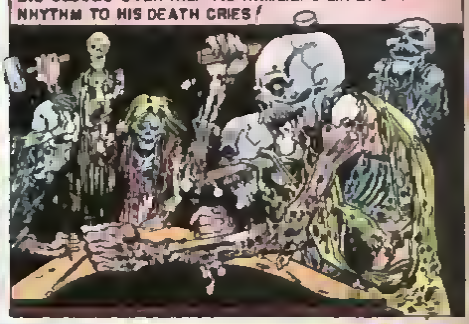




INSIDE THE DEPTHS OF THE MAUSOLEUM, NATHAN WAS SEEN THRUST INTO AN ORNATE COFFIN! A HALF DOZEN CORPSES FORCED AND PUSHED HIM INTO THE GAPING BOX, BRUSHING ASIDE HIS FRANTIC TRIES TO FREE HIMSELF . .

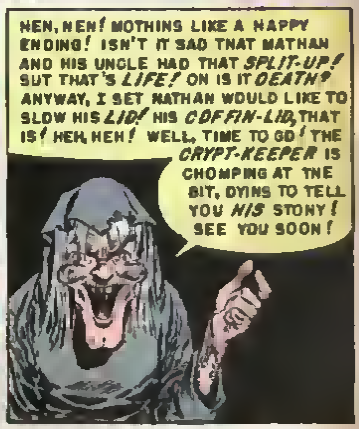


GRINNING, ROTTED FACES LEERED DOWN ON HIM! PIECES OF DECAYED FLESH AND CHUNKS OF MAGGOT-INFESTED BONE CAME OFF IN HIS HANDS AS HE STRUGGLED MIGHTILY! BUT HE FOUGHT IN VAIN! THE LID CLOSED OVER HIM AND HAMMERS MAILED A RHYTHM TO HIS DEATH CRIES!



MR. MANTIN IS EXTREMELY SATISFIED WITH HIS PURCHASE! IT TRULY *IS* A *HAUNTED* CASTLE! SO PROUD IS HE, THAT EVERY NIGHT HE INVITES GUESTS TO LISTEN TO THE AGONIZED WAILS THAT EMANATE FROM INSIDE THE MAUSOLEUM!

HEH, HEH! NOTHING LIKE A HAPPY ENDING! ISN'T IT SAD THAT NATHAN AND HIS UNCLE HAD THAT *SPLIT-UP!* BUT THAT'S *LIFE!* OR IS IT *DEATH?* ANYWAY, I SET NATHAN WOULD LIKE TO SLOW HIS *LID!* HIS *COFFIN-LID*, THAT IS! HEH, HEH! WELL, TIME TO GO! THE *CRYPT-KEEPER* IS CHOMPING AT THE BIT, DYING TO TELL YOU *HIS* STORY! SEE YOU SOON!



THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! AND NOW IT'S *MY* TURN TO ENTERTAIN YOU! SO, COME IN! COME IN TO THE *CRYPT OF TERROR*! ONCE AGAIN, YOUR *CRYPT-KEEPER* HAS CHOSEN A STORY ADAPTED FROM A TALE BY THAT *MASTER OF HORROR* AND *FANTASY*, **RAY BRADBURY!** THIS *CHILLER* IS ONE OF MY *FAVORITES*! IT'S CALLED...

LET'S PLAY POISON!

MICHAEL SCREAMED. RECESS WAS OVER AND MR. HOWARD, THE TEACHER, WAS STILL ABSENT FROM THE FILLING ROOM. THE SIXTEEN BOYS AND GIRLS CROWDED ABOUT MICHAEL...

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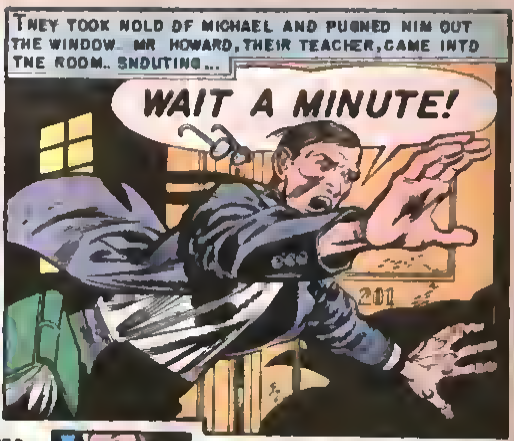
THE SIXTEEN BOYS AND GIRLS, JUMPING AND CLUSTERING AND SCREAMING, RAISED A WINDOW IT WAS THREE FLIGHTS DOWN TO THE SIDEWALK. MICHAEL FAILED...
WE HATE YOU!


THEY TOOK HOLD OF MICHAEL AND PUSHED HIM OUT THE WINDOW. MR. HOWARD, THEIR TEACHER, CAME INTO THE ROOM.. SHOUTING...
WAIT A MINUTE!
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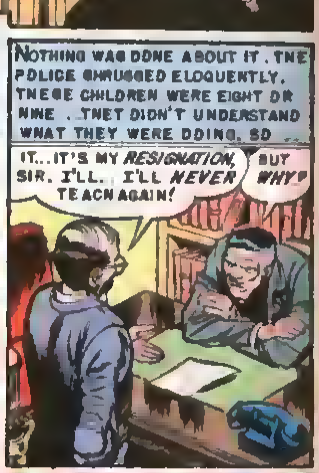
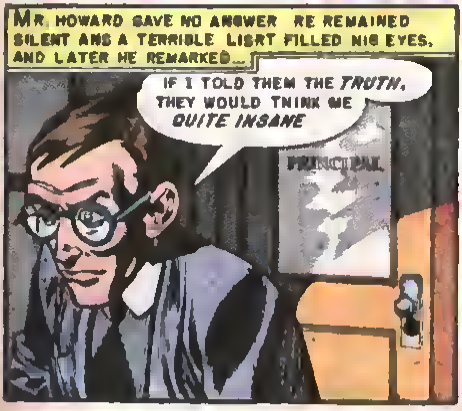
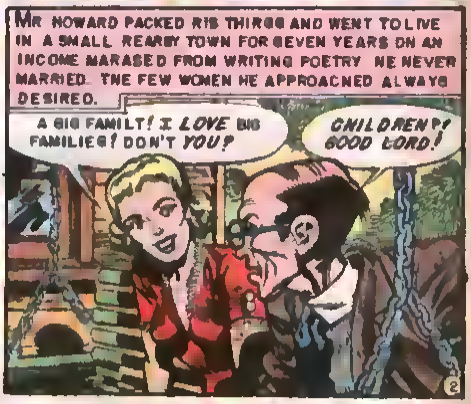
MICHAEL FELL THREE FLIGHTS...

MICHAEL DIED...


NOTHING WAS DONE ABOUT IT. THE POLICE SHRUGGED ELOQUENTLY. THESE CHILDREN WERE EIGHT OR NINE. THEY DIDN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY WERE DOING, SO...
IT...IT'S MY RESIGNATION, SIR. I'LL. I'LL NEVER TEACH AGAIN!
BUT WHY?


MR. HOWARD GAVE NO ANSWER. HE REMAINED SILENT AND A TERRIBLE LIGHT FILLED HIS EYES, AND LATER HE REMARKED...
IF I TOLD THEM THE TRUTH, THEY WOULD THINK ME QUITE INSANE
PRINCIPAL


MR. HOWARD PACKED HIS THINGS AND WENT TO LIVE IN A SMALL NEARBY TOWN FOR SEVEN YEARS ON AN INCOME MARGED FROM WRITING POETRY. HE NEVER MARRIED. THE FEW WOMEN HE APPROACHED ALWAYS DESIRED.
A BIG FAMILY! I LOVE BIG FAMILIES! DON'T YOU?
CHILDREN?! GOOD LORD!
2

IN THE AUTUMN OF HIS SEVENTH YEAR OF SELF-ENFORCED RETIREMENT, A GOOD FRIEND OF MR. HOWARD'S A TEACHER FELL ILL. FOR LACK OF A PROPER SUBSTITUTE, MR. HOWARD WAS SUMMONED AND CONVINCED THAT IT WAS HIS DUTY TO TAKE OVER THE CLASS. BECAUSE HE REALIZED THE APPOINTMENT COULD LAST NO LONGER THAN A FEW WEEKS, MR. HOWARD AGREED, UNHAPPILY. OR THAT MORNING MORNING IN SEPTEMBER, AS MR. HOWARD SLOWLY PACED THE AISLES OF THE SCHOOLROOM, HE ANNOUNCED

SOMETIMES SOMETIMES I ACTUALLY *BELIEVE* THAT CHILDREN ARE *INVADERS* FROM *ANOTHER DIMENSION!*

HE STOPPED, AND HIS SHINY DARK EYES RHAPPED FROM FACE TO FACE OF HIS SMALL AUDIENCE...

SOMETIMES—SOMETIMES I BELIEVE CHILDREN ARE LITTLE *MONSTERS* THRUST FROM HELL, BECAUSE THE DEVIL COULD NO LONGER *COPE* WITH THEM AND I CERTAINLY BELIEVE THAT EVERYTHING SHOULD BE DONE TO *REFORM* THEIR UNCIVIL LITTLE MINDS

MOST OF MR HOWARD'S WORDS RAN UNFAMILIARLY INTO THE WASHED AND UNWASHED EARS OF THE CHILDREN AROUND HIM. BUT ALL STARED AT HIM, AS IF HYPNOTIZED...

YOU ARE *ANOTHER RACE ENTIRELY*... YOUR MOTIVES, YOUR DISOBEDIENCES YOU ARE NOT *HUMAN!* YOU ARE... *CHILDREN!* THEREFORE, UNTIL SUCH TIMES AS YOU ARE *ADULTS*, YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO DEMAND *PRIVILEGES* OR QUESTION YOUR ELDERS WHO *KNOW* BETTER...

MR. HOWARD PAUSED AND PUT HIS ELEGANT RUMP UPON THE CHAIR BEHIND THE NEAT DUSTLESS DESK...

LIVING IN A WORLD OF FANTASY... WELL, THERE'LL BE NO FANTASY *HERE!* YOU'LL SOON DISCOVER THAT A *RULER* ON YOUR *HAND* IS NO *DREAM*, NO *FAERIE FRILL*, NO *PETER PAN EXCITEMENT*...

HAVE I *FRIGHTENED* YOU?! I *HAVE!* GOOD! YOU *DESERVE* TO BE! I WANT YOU TO KNOW WHERE WE *STAND!* I'M *NOT AFRAID OF YOU! HERE!* WHAT ARE YOU *WHISPERING* ABOUT, BACK THERE? SOME *NECROMANCY* OR OTHER...?

A LITTLE GIRL RAISED HER HAND...

WHAT'S... *NECROMANCY?*

WE'LL DISCUSS THAT WHEN OUR TWO YOUNG FRIENDS, MASTER ARNOLD AND MASTER ROWENS, EXPLAIN THEIR *WHISPERS! WELL*, YOUNG MEN...?

DONALD ROWERS AROSE...

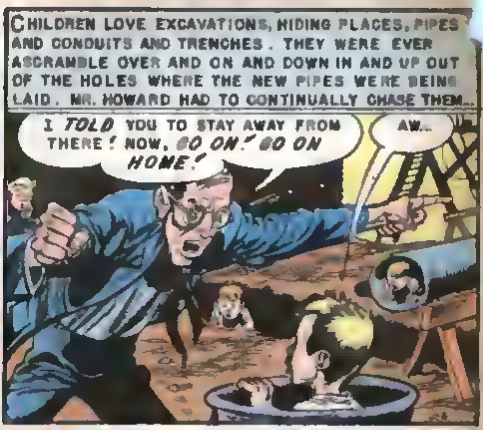
WE DON'T *LIKE* YOU! THAT'S ALL WE RAID!

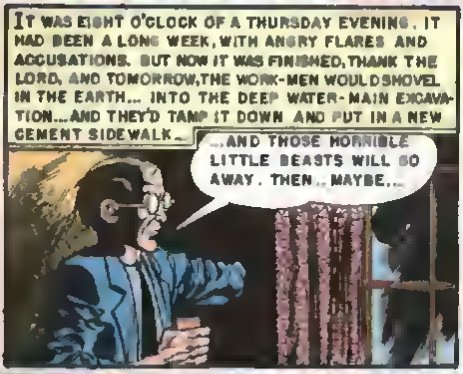
I *LIKE* FRANKNESS AND TRUTH. THANK YOU FOR YOUR HONESTY. BUT SIMULTANEOUSLY, I DO NOT *TOLERATE* FLIPPANT *REBELLION* YOU'LL STAY AN HOUR AFTER SCHOOL AND WASH THE BOARDS.

AFTEN SCHOOL, WALKING HOME, WITH AUTUMN LEAVES FALLING BOTH BEFORE AND AFTEN HIS PASSING, MR. HOWARD CAUGHT UP WITH FOUR OF HIS STUDENTS. HE RAPPED HIS CANE SHARPLY ON THE SIDEWALK
HERE! WHAT ARE YOU CHILDREN DOING? EXPLAIN! WHAT YOU WERE DOING HERE WHEN I CAME UP?
PLAYING POISON!
THEIR TEACHER'S FACE TWISTED. HE WAS CAREFULLY SARCASTIC...
POISON!? POISON, POISON, PLAYING POISON!? WELL! AND HOW DOES ONE PLAY POISON?
WHENEVER WE COME TO A DEAD MAN, WE JUMP OVER HIM!
IF YOU JUMP ON A DEAD MAN'S GRAVE, THEN YOU'RE POISONED AND FALL DOWN AND DIE!
DEAD MEN... GRAVES... POISONED? WHERE DID YOU GET THIS DEAD MAN IDEA?
SEE? ON THIS SQUARE THE NAMES OF THE TWO DEAD MEN!
RIDICULOUS! THOSE ARE THE NAMES OF THE CONTRACTORS WHO MIXED AND LAID THE CEMENT SIDEWALK!
EDITH AND CLARA BOTH GASPED WILDLY AND TURNED ACCUSING EYES TO THE TWO BOYS...
YOU SAID THEY WERE GRAVE-STONES!
YEAH! THEY ARE! WELL ALMOST, ANYWAY...
DELIBERATE LIES! FALSIFICATIONS OF THE HIGHEST CALIBRE! THERE'LL BE NO MORE OF THIS... UNDERSTAND?
MR. HOWARD
MR. NOWAND SWUNG OFF DOWN THE STREET.
I HOPE A BIRD DROPS SOMETHING RIGHT SMACK ON HIS NOSE...
COME ON, CLARA LET'S PLAY POISON
IT'S BEEN SPOILED! I'M GOING HOME!
I'M POISONED! LOOK! I'M POISONED! GAHHH...
OH...

SATURDAY MORNING, MR. HOWARD GLANCED OUT OF HIS FRONT WINDOW AND SWORE WHEN HE SAW ISABEL MAKING CHALK MARKS ON THE SIDEWALK AND THEN HOPPING ABOUT, MAKING A MONOTONOUS SING-SONG WITH HER VOICE...
STOP THAT!
RUSHING OUT, HE ALMOST FLUNG HER TO THE PAVEMENT IN HIS EMOTION. HE GRABBED HER AND SHOOK HER VIOLENTLY AND LET HER GO AND STOOD OVER HER AND THE CHALK MARKS...
I WAS ONLY PLAYING HOPSCOTCH!
I DON'T CARE! YOU CAN'T PLAY IT HERE! YOUNG WITCH..
BENDING, HE ERASED THE CHALK MARKS WITH HIS HANDKERCHIEF, MUTTERING...
PENTAGRAMS RHYMES AND INCANTATIONS AND ALL LOOKING PERFECTLY INNOCENT. GOD, HOW INNOCENT! YOU LITTLE FIEND!
HE MADE AS IF TO STRIKE HER, BUT STOPPED. ISABEL RAN OFF WAILING..
GO AHEAD, YOU LITTLE FOOL. RUN AND TELL YOUR COHORTS THAT YOU'VE FAILED. THEY WILL HAVE TO TRY SOME OTHER WAY. THEY WON'T GET AROUND ME, THEY WON'T. OH, NO...
MR. HOWARD STALKED BACK INTO THE HOUSE AND POURED HIMSELF A STIFF DRINK OF BRANDY. THE REST OF THE DAY HE HEARD THE CHILDREN PLAYING KICK-THE-CAN, HIDE-AND-SEEK, OVER-ANNIE-OVER, JACKS, TOPS, MIBS... AND THE SOUND OF THE LITTLE MONSTERS IN EVERY SHRUB AND SHADOW WOULD NOT LET HIM REST..
ANOTHER WEEK OF THIS AND I'LL GO STARK, STARING, MAD! GOD IN HEAVEN, WHY WEREN'T WE ALL BORN ADULTS?
ANOTHER WEEK, THEN.. AND THE HATRED GROWING BETWEEN HIM AND THE CHILDREN. THE HATE AND THE FEAR GROWING APACE..
BUT THEY WON'T TOUCH ME! THEY WON'T DARE TOUCH ME! IT'S ALL VERY SILLY, ANYHOW AND THERE'S NOTHING TO IT. I'LL SOON BE AWAY FROM HERE, AND.. THEM I'LL SOON..
SUDDENLY, THERE WAS A WHITE SKULL AT THE WINDOW
GASP...

THE DAYS BNEW SHONT. THE NIGHTS CAME TOO SOON. ARO THEN, THEY STANTED WONKING ON THE WATER-MAIN OUTSIDE MR. HOWARD'S HOUSE...
DOOO LONO! THAT'S ALL I NEEDED...


CHILDREN LOVE EXCAVATIONS, HIDING PLACES, PIPES AND CONDUITS AND TRENCHES. THEY WERE EVER ASCRAMBLE OVER AND ON AND DOWN IN AND UP OUT OF THE HOLES WHERE THE NEW PIPES WERE BEING LAID. MR. HOWARD HAD TO CONTINUALLY CHASE THEM...
I TOLD YOU TO STAY AWAY FROM THERE! NOW, GO ON! GO ON HOME!
AW...


IT WAS EIGHT O'CLOCK OF A THURSDAY EVENING. IT HAD BEEN A LONG WEEK, WITH ANGRY FLARES AND ACCUSATIONS. BUT NOW IT WAS FINISHED, THANK THE LORD, AND TOMORROW, THE WORK-MEN WOULD SHOVEL IN THE EARTH... INTO THE DEEP WATER-MAIN EXCAVATION... AND THEY'D TAMP IT DOWN AND PUT IN A NEW CEMENT SIDEWALK...
...AND THOSE HORRIBLE LITTLE BEASTS WILL GO AWAY. THEN... MAYBE...

THERE WAS A WHITE SKULL AT THE WINDOW...
GOOD LORD!

THERE COULD BE NO DOUBT THAT A BOY'S HAND HELO THE SKULL AGAINST THE BLASS... TAPPING AND NOVING IT. THERE WAS A CHILDISH TITTERING FNON OUTSIDE...
HEY, YOU!

MR. HOWARD BURST FROM THE HOUSE. HE EXPLODED INTO THE NIDST OF THE THREE RUNNING BOYS. HE LEAPED AFTEN THEM, SHOUTING AND YELLING...

THE STREET WAS DANK, BUT HE SAW THE FIGURES DART BEYOND AND BELOW HIM HE SAW THEM SONT OF BOUND AND COULD NOT REMEMBER THE REASON FOR THIS, UNTIL TOO LATE...

THE EARTH OPENED UNDEN HIM AND HE FELL INTO THE PIT, HIS HEAD TAKING A TENNIFIC BLOW FNOM A LAID WATEN PIPE.

THUD

AND AS HE LOST CONSCIOUSNESS, HE HAD AN IMPRESSION OF AN AVALANCHE, SET OFF BY HIS FALL, CASCADING DOWN COOL MOIST PELLETS OF DIRT UPON HIS PANTS, HIS SHOES, UPON HIS COAT, UPON HIS SPINE, UPON THE BACK OF HIS NECK, HIS HEAD, FILLING HIS MOUTH, HIS EARS, HIS EYES, HIS NOSTRILS.

THE NEIGHBOR LADY WITH THE EGGS WRAPPED IN A NAPKIN KNOCKED ON MR. HOWARD'S DOOR THE NEXT DAY FOR FIVE MINUTES. WHEN SHE OPENED THE DOOR, FINALLY, AND WALKED IN, SHE FOUND NOTHING BUT APECULES OF NUS DUST FLOATING IN THE SUNNY AIR. AS SHE RAID MANY TIMES IN THE FOLLOWING YEARS ..

"FUNNIEST THING." WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO MR. HOWARD?

AND ADULTS, BEING WHAT THEY ARE, NEVER OBSERVANT, PAID NO ATTENTION TO THE CHILDREN PLAYING POISON IN THE FOLLOWING AUTUMNS. EVEN WHEN THE CHILDREN LEAPED OVEN ONE PARTICULAN SQUARE OF CEMENT, TURNED AROUND, AND BLANDED AT THE MARKS ON IT WHICH NEAD ..

M. HOWARD R.I.P.

WHO'S MR. HOWARD, BILLY?

AW, I GUESS HE'S THE GUY WHO LAID THE CEMENT.

WHAT DOES R.I.P. MEAN?

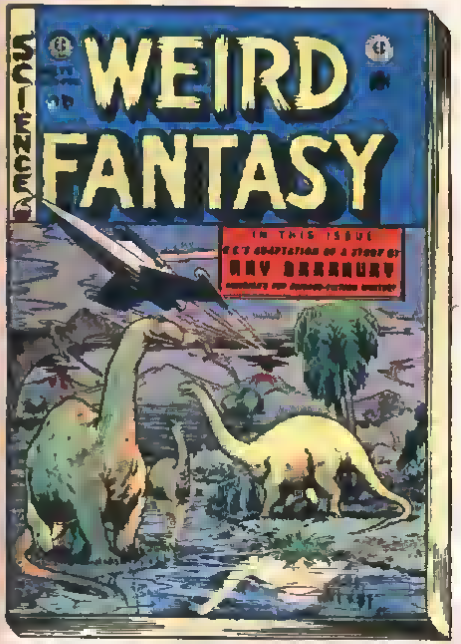
AW, WHO KNOWS? YOU'RE POISON! YOU STEPPED ON IT!

BET ALONG, CHILDREN DON'T BLOCK MOTHER'S PATH! GET ALONG!

HEH, HEH! WELL, THAT'S IT, KIDDIES! THAT'S MR. BRADBURY'S TALE. THE WAY HE WROTE IT! I HOPE YOU LIKED IT! NOW, I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO THE VAULT-KEEPER! I'LL HAVE MORE NAY BRADBURY CHILLERS IN THE FUTURE, SO LOOK FOR THEM! 'BYE, NOW!

E.C. FANS!

WE AT E.C. ARE PROUDEST OF OUR SCIENCE - FICTION MAGAZINES! LOOK FOR...



ANOTHER "NEW TREND" ENTERTAINING COMIC!

ON SALE NOW AT ALL NEWSSTANDS!

LAST ASSIGNMENT

There was a fellow in the pressroom today . . . said he was a friend of Brian Conrad, just thought he'd drop in on him. Well, I told the fellow that Conrad didn't work on the Daily Chronicle anymore! He asked for more information about Conrad's whereabouts or forwarding address. I told the fellow that Conrad had walked out of here, camera in hand, on an assignment and never bothered to come back. I knew . . . I was on that assignment with him. That was five months ago!

The paper has changed a lot since then! In fact, Conrad was responsible for building up its circulation with his sensational on-the-spot photos! Remember that picture of the bloody killing in Maloney's Tavern? A taxi driver had his face blasted away with a shot-gun by a fellow hackie. Seems they had argued over a fare. Well, Conrad stood on the bar and snapped a "Bomb-sight shot" of the whole mess on the floor.

Then there was the time the police pulled that blue and blooted "floater" out of the river! The corpse's features were all distorted by the expansion of gases formed by decomposing tissue. The bullet-hole between its bulging eyes had enlarged to the size of a half-dollar. But nothing bothered Conrad! He told me the "floater's" skin peeled off in the police crew's gloves when they lifted the fish-bitten body out of the river.

I guess there's a bit of inhuman streak in all of us that allows us to be exhilarated by a vicarious sacrifice. I'd see the men in the printing room turning the front page at every angle soon as it came off the presses. One of Conrad's "gems" usually crowded the masthead! Maybe I'm just soft . . . but I've seen fellow soldiers die in a Japanese prison camp in the last war. Just before they expired, they'd creep away to a secluded part of the barracks. A man likes to die with some semblance of human dignity.

Then there was that terrible explosion at the gunpowder plant! Conrad took pics through the acrid smoke. Those poor, tormented, supplicating human torches ran out of the inferno and collapsed in charred heaps on the ground before him. Conrad always had a cast-iron stomach. Well, he talked the editor

into playing up this particular photo . . . real BIG!! Said it would give impetus to a new safety program for plants manufacturing explosives.

When Conrad wasn't covering suicides, stabbings, murders, and crawling under wrecked trains, his attention was occupied by lovely Erica Williams, the society editor on the Chronicle. Most people said they made a strange pair, what with her latest fashions and social teas and his penchant for violence and sensationalism. It was like the mingling of her soap-and-water-goodness with developing fluid and formaldehyde.

The last time I saw Conrad, I was sipping hot coffee with him in the pressroom. We were alone and he was telling me the morbid details of all the deaths and disasters he had covered. He was grinning insidiously as he had one chill December morning when we watched a young medical student ease himself off the window ledge on the tenth floor of a mid-town hotel. The distraught youth had been despondent over flunking a physiology exam. As the boy's falling body twisted through the air between the abandoned, lifeless ledge and the hotel marquee, the early morning blasts wrapped me in an icy despair. And just as the body rebounded off the marquee, Conrad's omnipresent camera mercifully blinded me with its flashing bulb. Conrad would have been sorely disappointed if the boy had changed his mind.

Erica Williams entered the pressroom. I watched the crisp sweep of her black taffeta dress and the fluorescent lights shimmering off her matching jacket with its embroidered collar and cuffs. A little black velvet cloche hugged her carefully arranged blonde hair. Conrad greeted her with a chuck under her chin. She smiled warmly. He almost seemed *human* . . . for once. He walked Erica outside to where her convertible was parked. She was off to one of her social events. Conrad came inside again and we drank some more coffee . . . in silence. Then I got a tip from police headquarters . . . a bad head-on collision involving two cars on Main Street!

When Conrad and I arrived at the crash, spectators were pointing up at a telephone pole nearby. We pushed through the crowd. Instinctively, Conrad raised his camera, pointing it at a body that had been hurled there by the impact of the crash. The victim had been impaled beneath the chin by an iron climbing spike on the side of the pole.

Conrad lowered his camera. The victim's hair was blonde . . . and a little black velvet cloche held it neatly in place!

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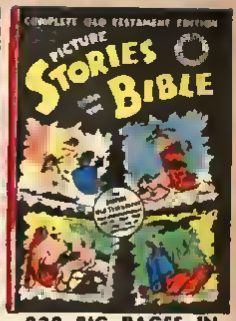

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THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Not only did I get shafted out of 40% of my column for the annual "who-owns-what", this issue, but a late communique from the front-office informs me that my idiot editors have requested (REQUESTED! That's a laugh! They're standing next to me with hatchets!) the rest of my column for a "grave discussion," or some such rot! So before I get my head split open, here they are! Grumble . . . grumble!

Our eternal gratitude for your most gracious acquiesence, dear V. K.! If we may wax serious, we'd like to bring to the attention of you readers a condition existing in the comic industry which you are probably not aware of! In the past, we have always tried to make you feel that you are all a personal part of the E. C. family. We have earnestly attempted to play things straight and honest with you, and have brought our problems to you when they arose. What we have now is a very serious problem! Every few years, the comic industry "collapses!" The last big collapse was early in 1950. Several publishers went out of business, most others dropped titles, changed titles, or temporarily suspended operations. At that time, we at E.C. completely revised our line, and started from scratch with our "new trend" comics. For the last three years, you readers have been good to us! We have prospered, grown, and now publish 10 bi-monthlies. We were highly successful in horror, science-fiction and then in war comics. Our success led to other publishers loading the stands with their horror, s-f, and war comics . . loading the stands to extent that in September 1952, there were over 500 different comic mags being published! As incredible total . . an *impossible total!* Although more comic magazines are being sold today than ever before, the total sales cannot support 500 titles. So the inevitable happened! Last March, the comic industry began to collapse again under the weight of this impossible number of titles. At this writing, (early October), the field is filled with rumors of publisher after publisher either going out of business or dropping titles! Money is being lost in great gobs by virtually everyone in comics! Why are we troubling you, our readers, with all this? Two reasons: first, to thank you! E.C. is a small outfit, as comic outfits go. Our capital reserve is relatively small. IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR THE FAITHFUL ISSUE AFTER ISSUE BUYING HABIT OF YOU READERS, E.C. WOULD HAVE GONE DOWN THE DRAIN! For this . . your loyalty and continued readership . . we earnestly and sincerely thank you. As V.K. would put it, "We're all choked up!" Secondly, we are telling you all this because we want to ask a favor. There are STILL over 500 titles on the stands, and will be for some months! (It takes time to drop a title!) Thus far, although we're losing money on some of our titles, E.C. is standing firm, and we are continuing to publish all 10 magazines! The favor? Simply this. KEEP BUYING E.C. MAGAZINES! Please don't misunderstand. We don't want a *single* reader to spend a *single* dime that he needs for anything important on an E.C. mag. But if you're PLANNING to spend that dime on a comic mag, make it an E.C.! More than ever before, we need your business! We need your business to *stay* in business!

Before closing, just a word about RAY BRADBURY, America's top horror and s-f writer . . who, as most of you probably know by now, has given E.C. permission to adapt some of his best stories. Mr. B.'s fascinating horror tale, LET'S PLAY POISON, *appears in this issue. Subscriptions to any E.C. mag will set you back 75c . . six issues . . . full year's supply . . manila envelopes. Please keep writing . . . your letters simultaneously inspire us and keep us on our toes to give you the best! Address for mail and/or subscriptions is*

The Vault-Keeper
Room 706, Dept. 28
225 Lafayette Street
N. Y. C. 12, N. Y.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION, REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946 (Title 39, United States Code, Section 233) of VAULT OF HORROR published Bi-monthly at New York, N. Y. for October 1, 1952.

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, L. L. Pub. Co. Inc., 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y., Editor, Albert B. Feldstein, 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y., Managing Editor, William M. Gaines, 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y.; Business manager, Frank D. Lee, 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y.

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.) L. L. Pub. Co. Inc., 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y. Wm. M. Gaines, 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y. J. K. Gaines, 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding one percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.) None.

4. Paragraphs 2 and 3 include, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting; also the statements in the two paragraphs show the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner.

5. The average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the 12 months preceding the date shown above was: (This information is required from daily, weekly, semiweekly, and triweekly newspapers only.)

(Signed) FRANK D. LEE, Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 5th day of September, 1952.

[SEAL] Ettore De Stefano, Notary Public. (My commission expires March 30, 1954.)

THE VAULT-KEEPER'S

GRIM FAIRY TALE!

HER, NEN! WELL, I SEE IT'S TIME FOR ANOTREN IDIOTIC INFANTILE INSANITY ; ANOTREN CHILDISR CHILLER.. AROTREN GHIM FAINY TALE! I'VE CHOSEN A DELIGRTFUL ONE FON YOU THIS TIME...ONE THAT OUGHT TO TICKLE YOUN NIGS! IT'S CALLED. .

A Sock for Christmas

ONCE UPON A TINE LONG, LONG AGO, IN A HUGE BEAUTIFUL CASTLE, THERE LIVED A KING, HIS QUEEN, AND THEIR ONLY SON, THE ROYAL PRINCE! NOW, SINCE THE YOUNG PRINCE WAS THEIR ONLY SON AND HEIR TO THE THRONE, THE ROYAL COUPLE SPOILED THE BOY! WHATEVER PRINCE TARBY, FOR THAT WAS HIS NAME WANTED, HE RECEIVED! WHATEVER HE DID WAS NEVER WRONG! AS THE KING PUT IT, .

TARBY IS THE *ROYAL PRINCE!* HE CAN *DO* NO WRONG!

THE YOUNG PRINCE *PUSHED* ME INTO THE *CASTLE MOAT*, YOUR MAJESTY! IF HE WERE *MY* CHILD, I'D *WHIP* HIM *BLACK AND BLUE* FOR...

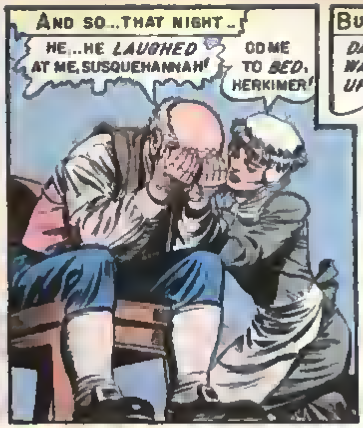
WELL, HE'S NOT YOUR CHILD! HE'S THE ROYAL PRINCE! THE ROYAL PRINCE DOES NOT GET WHIPPED! UNDERSTAND?
Y-YES, YOUR MAJESTY! THANK YOU, YOUR MAJESTY!
HMMPH! THE NERVE OF HIM... SUGGESTING THAT I WHIP DEAR TARBY.
WELL, IRVING! ACTUALLY, THE BOY DESERVES A WHIPPING! HE RUINED THE PRIME MINISTER'S NEW OUTFIT!
TOO BAD! IF THE PRIME MINISTER IS SO ANXIOUS TO WHIP SOMEONE, LET HIM WHIP HIS OWN CHILD...
BUT IT WAS TARBY WHO...
ZOUNDS, MATILDA! I'VE GOT IT! I'VE GOT THE ANSWER TO OUR PROBLEM! COME WITH ME, TARBY!
IRVING! WHERE ARE YOU GOING...
THE KING ORDERED HIS COACH! THEN, HE AND THE YOUNG PRINCE DROVE DOWN FROM THE CASTLE INTO THE PEASANT VILLAGE FAR BELOW...
MAKE WAY.. MAKE WAY..
IT'S THE KING!
...AND THE PRINCE!
THE COACH IS STOPPING!
THE KING POKED HIS HEAD OUT OF THE COACH AND SCANNED THE SEA OF FACES BEFORE HIM! SUDDENLY, HE POINTED...
YOU! COME HERE!
HE POINTS TO THE BAKER'S CHILD!
WHAT DOES HE WANT WITH HIM?
THE KING STARED DOWN AT THE SMALL BOY BEFORE HIM... THEN AT PRINCE TARBY... THEN AT THE BOY AGAIN! WITH A GRUNT OF SATISFACTION, HE NODDED...
YES! VERY GOOD! VERY GOOD! WHERE IS YOUR FATHER OR MOTHER, YOU RABAMUFFIN?
I AM THE BOY'S FATHER, YOUR MAJESTY! WHAT... WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH HIM?
2

THE BOY IS COMING WITN ME... TO THE CASTLE! HE WILL LIVE THERE... AS PRINCE TARBY'S COMPANION!
NO! NO! NE IS MY SON! YOU CANNOT TAKE HIM FROM ME!
WDULD YOU DENY YOUR SON THE ADVANTAGES I CAR OFFER HIM? GOOD FOOD? GDDD CLOTHES? AN EDUCATION?
N-NO! BUT... BUT...
THE COACH DOOR SWUNG OPEN...
GET IN, BDY! I COMMAND YDU!
THE KIRD ORDERS YDU, MY SON!
NO... SOB... FATHER... SOB...ND...
THE BOY'S FATNER PUSHED NIS YOUNG SOR IRTO THE COAGR...
DD NOT CRY, SON! IT IS FOR YDUR OWN GOOD! WILL WE WILL WEBE ABLE TD SEE NIM AGAIN, YDUR MAJESTY?
AT CHRISTMAS! I WILL LET HIM COME HOME FOR CHRISTMAS! ALL RIDHT, CD ACH M AN!
MAKE WAY.. MAKE WAY...
THE BAKER'S SON WAS TAKEN TO THE CASTLE! BUT WHER HE ARRIVED, HE SOON FOUND OUT THAT THERE WAS MORE TO IT THAN JUST BEING SPOILED PRINCE TARBY'S COMPANION! THERE WAS A CATCH...
...AND FROM HOW ON, LADIES ARD GENTLEMEN OF THE COURT, WHEN PRINCE TARBY IS BAD, HE IS TD BE PUNISHED! BUT.. YOU WILL NDT WHIP PRINCE TARBY! YOU WILL WHIP... NIS COMPANION HERE! YDU WILL WHIP PRINCE TARBY'S WHIPPING BOY...
ARD SD, THE FIRST WHIPPING-BOY DAME IRTO BEING! TNE POOR BAKER'S SON BECAME PRINCE TARBY'S WHIPPING SUBSTITUTE! ANYTIME TARBY WAS BAD, THE WHIPPING BOY WAS PUNISHED...
SDB... SDB...
TNAT WAS... URGG... WRONG DF YOU... UNGG... TO PUT THE... URGG... CAT UNGG... INTO... UNGG... THE OVEN, TARBY!
YES, ROYAL CHEF! I WON'T DD IT ADAIN, RDYAL CHEF!
NDT ONLY WAS THE WHIPPING-BOY THRASHED FOR PRINCE TARBY'S MISDOINGS! THERE WERE OTHER SUBSTITUTIONS...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU HATE BATHS? YOU'VE GOT TO TAKE A BATH! NOW, COME ON...
JUST ONE MOMENT, ROYAL WASHER! OH, WHIPPING-BOY...
YES, PRINCE TARBY!

THE WHIPPING-BOY WAS MADE TO SUBSTITUTE FOR ALL OF THE PRINCE'S DISTASTEFUL RESPONSIBILITIES...
SPINACH IS GOOD FOR YOU! YOU MUST EAT YOUR SPINACH, PRINCE TARBY!
YES, ROYAL DIETICIAN! EN, WHIPPING-BOY
PASS ME YOUR PLATE.. CHOKE.. PRINCE TARBY...
SUMMER PASSED, AND FALL CAME TO THE KINGDOM' AND WITH IT CAME...
GO TO SCHOOL? I HATE SCHOOL! THE ROYAL WHIPPING-BOY WILL ATTEND SCHOOL FOR ME, NOYAL TUTON!ER... ROYAL WHIPPING-BOY
YES, PRINCE TARBY! WHEN DO I START, ROYAL TUTOR?
TOMORROW MORNING, NOYAL WHIPPING-BOY! EIGHT O'CLOCK!
AND SO, THE WHIPPING-BOY EVEN HAD TO GO TO SCHOOL FOR PRINCE TARBY! THERE WASN'T ANYTHING THAT PRINCE TARBY DISLIKED THAT HE HAD TO DO! THE ROYAL WHIPPING BOY DID THEM ALL...
YOUR ROOM IS A DISGRACE, PRINCE TARBY! TOYS ALL OVER! CLEAN IT UP!
ROYAL WHIPPING BOY...
BUT WORST OF ALL WAS WHEN PRINCE TARBY WAS BAD ON PURPOSE...JUST TO SEE THE WHIPPING BOY RECEIVE THE WHIPPING...
AND...I HOPE...THIS...TEACHES YOU...A...LESSON...YOUNG MAN!
SOB... SOB...
FINALLY, WINTER DREW NEAR! THE FIRST SNOW BLANKETED THE CASTLE AND THE CASTLE GROUNDS...
IT'S ALMOST CHRISTMAS TIME, PRINCE TARBY! SOON I WILL SEE MY MOTHER AND FATHER AGAIN....
...AND SANTA CLAUS WILL COME AND FILL MY STOCKING AND BRING ME PRESENTS!
...AND SANTA CLAUS WILL FILL MY STOCKING AND BRING ME PRESENTS!
HO, HO! LISTEN TO THE WHIPPING-BOY! DON'T YOU KNOW THAT SANTA CLAUS DOESN'T BRING THINGS TO BAD LITTLE BOYS?
BUT I HAVEN'T BEEN BAD! I...
YOU'VE BEEN PUNISHED, HAVEN'T YOU? I'VE SEEN IT! I'VE SEEN YOU WHIPPED A DOZEN TIMES OR MORE A WEEK! ONLY BAD LITTLE BOYS GET WHIPPED! I DON'T GET WHIPPED! I'M GOOD! SANTA WILL VISIT ME... NOT YOU!

FIRALLY, ON THE DAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS, A COACH BROUGHT THE BAKER'S BOY..THE WHIPPING-BOY... DOWN FROM THE CASTLE TO THE VILLAGE FAR BELOW...TO THE CHILD'S MOTHER ARD FATHER...
MY BABY! MY BABY!
MY SON!
MOMMY! DADDY! SOB. SOB
I'LL BE BACK TO PICK HIM UP TOMOR-ROW NIGHT!!
SO OR, HE'D TOLD HIS MOTHER AND FATHER ALL ABOUT THE CASTLE ARD WHY THE KING HAD BROUGHT RIM THERE...
ARD SO, IF HE'S BAD, I GET WHIPPED FOR HIM! BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE ME BAD, DOES IT, FATHER MOTHER?
OF COURSE NOT, MY CHILD!
THE DIRTY..
THER SANTA CLAUS WILL FILL MY STOCK-ING.. ARD HE WILL BRING ME PRESERTS!
WELL, I... WE..
OF COURSE, MY SON! WHY SHOULDN'T HE?
BECAUSE, PRINCE TARBY SAID SANTA WOULDN'T! HE SAID THAT BAD LITTLE BOYS GET WHIPPED, ARD SINCE I GOT WHIPPED...
REVER YOU MIND, MY SON! GO.. HANG UP A STOCK-ING... THE BIGGEST ONE YOU CAR FIND!
AND SO, WITH TEARS OF JOY STREAMING DOWR HIS LITTLE FACE, THE ROYAL WHIPPING-BOY HUNG UP A LARGE THREADBARE STOCK-IRD..
NERKIMER! YOU KNOW WE HAVE NO MONEY! HOW COULD WE
HUSH, SUSQUEHANNAH! THE BOY WILL HEAR YOU!
THEN HE CLIMBED IRTO HIS BED AND FELL FAST ASLEEP...A FAIRT SMILE ON HIS TEAR-STAINED FACE.
HOW COULD YOU PROMISE THE BOY, NERKIMER? YOU KNOW WE'RE BROKE! NOW HE'LL EXPECT SANTA CLAUS TO FILL HIS STOCKING AND GIVE HIM PRESENTS!
THE KING SHOULD DO IT, SUSQUEHANNAH! THE KING SHOULD DO IT AFTER ALL THAT BOY'S BEEN THROUSH...
...HE OWES IT TO HIM! THE KING SHOULD FILL MELVIN'S STOCKING! AND I'M DDIRD TO ASK HIM TO...
NERKIMER! COME BACK! HE'LL LAUGH AT YOU! HE'LL LAUGH...

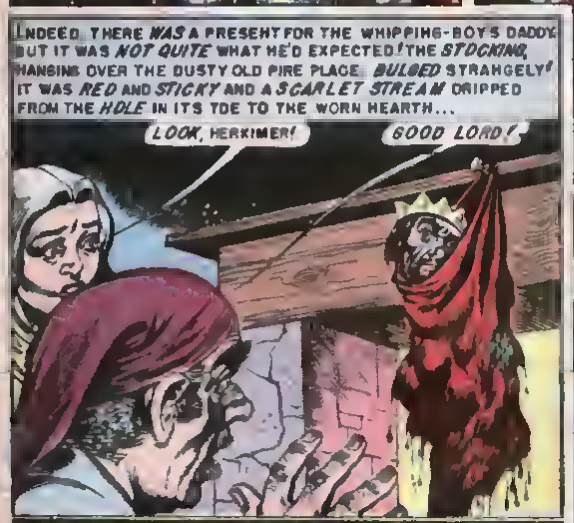
HA-HA-HA-HA-
HA! HO HO

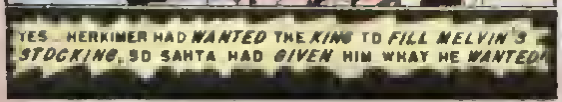

AND SO..THAT NIGHT..
HE...HE LAUGHED AT ME, SUSQUEHANNAH!
COME TO BED, HERKIMER!

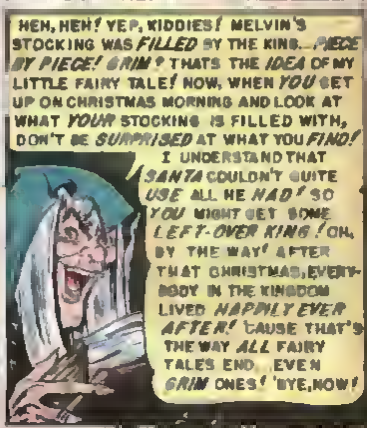
BUT..THE NEXT MORNING..
DADDY! MOMMY! WAKE UP! WAKE UP! SANTA WAS HERE!
HUH?
WHA..?

THE BOY SKIPPED AND DANCED AS HE LED HIS SLEEPY-EYED PARENTS TO THE PILE OF GAYLY WRAPPED PACKAGES..
SEE? SEE?
WELL, I'LL BE...
LOOK! A NOTE!

WHAT DOES IT SAY, HERKIMER?
IT SAYS 'MERRY CHRISTMAS, MELVIN!' SINCE YOU WERE THE PRINCE'S WHIPPING-BOY, YOU DESERVE HIS PRESENTS! AND THERE'S ONE FOR YOUR DADDY, TOO...JUST WHAT HE ASKED FOR!' AND IT'S SIGNED...
'SANTA CLAUS'!


INDEED THERE WAS A PRESENT FOR THE WHIPPING-BOY'S DADDY, BUT IT WAS NOT QUITE WHAT HE'D EXPECTED! THE STOCKING, HANGING OVER THE DUSTY OLD FIRE PLACE, BULGED STRANGELY! IT WAS RED AND STICKY AND A SCARLET STREAM DRIPPED FROM THE HOLE IN ITS TOE TO THE WORN HEARTH...
LOOK, HERKIMER!
GOOD LORD!


YES.. HERKIMER HAD WANTED THE KING TO FILL MELVIN'S STOCKING, SO SANTA HAD GIVEN HIM WHAT HE WANTED!


HEH, HEH! YEP, KIDDIES! MELVIN'S STOCKING WAS FILLED BY THE KING...PIECE BY PIECE! GRIM? THAT'S THE IDEA OF MY LITTLE FAIRY TALE! NOW, WHEN YOU GET UP ON CHRISTMAS MORNING AND LOOK AT WHAT YOUR STOCKING IS FILLED WITH, DON'T BE SURPRISED AT WHAT YOU FIND!
I UNDERSTAND THAT SANTA COULDN'T QUITE USE ALL HE HAD! SO YOU MIGHT GET SOME LEFT-OVER KING! OH, BY THE WAY! AFTER THAT CHRISTMAS, EVERYBODY IN THE KINGDOM LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER! 'CAUSE THAT'S THE WAY ALL FAIRY TALES END...EVEN GRIM ONES! 'BYE, NOW!

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE,HEE! *GREETINGS,GHOULS!* IT'S *SNACK TIME* IN THE *HAUNT OF FEAR* ONCE AGAIN! YOUR *REEKING RECEIPE RUSTLER-UPPER,THE OLD WITCH,* IS READY TO DISH OUT ANOTRER DELICIOUS DELIRIUM DELVING! SO COME IN... CRAWL UP TO THE FIRE... TUCK TOUR DROOL-CUPS UNDER YOUR FLABBY CHINS ,FASTEN YOUR SLURP-SHROUDS AROUND YOUR SCRAWNY NECKS... AND I'LL SERVE YOU THE *SANITY-SHATTERING SPECIAL* FOR TODAY CALLED...

PICKLED PINTS!

THE GRIME-COVERED DERELICT STOOD ON THE LITTER-STREWN SIDEWALK,STARING WITH BLOOD-SHOT EYES INTO THE BOWERY BAR WINDOW! HIS NERVOUS FINGERS WERE THRUST DEEP INTO THE POCKETS OF HIS SHABBY PANTS, FEELING HOPEFULLY FOR COINS WHICH HE KNEW WERE NOT THERE! BEHIND HIM, A WELL-DRESSED MAN STUDIED THE SEEDY CHARACTER, WATCHING HIM LICK HIS DRIED AND CRACKED LIPS THIRSTILY. . .

HOW'D YOU LIKE A *DRINK* BUDDY?

HUH? WHO? *ME?* YOU OFFERIN' ME A *DRINK?*

GHASTLY

THE WELL-DRESSED MAN EDGED CLOSER TO THE DOWN-AND OUTER.
NO! I'M NOT OFFERIN' YOU A DRINK! I'M OFFERIN' YOU A CHARGE T'MAKE TEN BUCKS SO YOU CAN BUY YOUR OWN!
TEN BUCKS! THAT'S A LOT OF DOUGH! WHAT'S THE CATCH?
NO CATCH! IT ONLY TAKES A FEW MINUTES! ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS BECOME A BLOOD-DONOR.
A... A WHAT?
BLOOD DONOR! GO TO THIS ADDRESS.. DONATE A PINT OF BLOOD... AND THEY'LL PAY YOU TEN BUCKS! THERE'S NOTHING TO IT!
GIMME... GIMME THE ADDRESS!
TEN MINUTES LATER, THE BOWERY DERELICT HAD CLIMBED THE RICKETY STAIRS OF THE ARCIENT LOFT BUILDING AND KNOCKED ON THE SCARRED AND BATTERED DOOR...
YES, SIR? WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
I..I GOT THIS ADDRESS.. FROM... FROM SOME GUY! HE SAID I COULD MAKE TEN BUCKS HERE IF... IF.
OH, YES! OF COURSE! YOU WANT TO DONATE A PINT OF BLOOD! COME IN! I'LL BE WITH YOU IN A MOMENT! JUST AS SOON AS I'VE FINISHED WITH THIS GENTLEMAN...
S-SURE! OKAY! I'LL WAIT!
AN A SOILED CAT, ANOTHER POORLY-DRESSED, WHITE-FACED BOWERY CHARACTER LAY, WATCHING THE TINY STREAM OF RED LIQUID PULSATE INTO THE JAR THAT STOOD ON THE TABLE BESIDE HIM...
HELLO, JACK! EEJYUSHT TEN BUCKS I EVER MADE! RUSHIN' TO IT! RUSHIN' AT ALL...
NO TALKING, PLEASE!
FINALLY, THE ALCOHOL-SATURATED CHARACTER ON THE COT WAS FINISHED! HE SAT UP AND STAGGERED TOWARD THE DOOR.
HERE'S YOUR TEN DOLLARS, SIR! NOW DON'T FORGET! EAT A GOOD MEAL AND TAKE IT EASY TONIGHT!
YESSIR... THANKS.. YESS...
2

HEE, HEE! NOW THERE'S A NEW RACKET, EH, KIDDIES? TEN BUCKS FOR A PINT OF BLOOD! WHY EVERYONE KNOWS THAT PRIVATE BLOOD BANKS PAY DONORS UP TO THIRTY AND FORTY DOLLARS FOR A PINT OF BLOOD! THAT IS, HEALTHY DONORS! MEN LIKE THESE DOWN-AND-OUTERS WOULD NEVER BE ALLOWED TO GIVE BLOOD TO LEGITIMATE BLOOD BANKS.
THAT NIGHT... IN THE SHABBY LOFT BUILDING OFFICE WITH THE DIRTY COT...
WELL, PAL? HOW'D WE DO TODAY?
NINETEEN PINTS!
AT THIRTY BUCKS A PINT THAT'S THREE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY BUCKS PROFIT! HEH, HEH! NOT BAD! NOT BAD!
ONE NINETY APIECE! I'LL SAY IT ISN'T BAD... FOR A DAY'S WORK!
AND WE'RE NOT BREAKIN' ANY LAWS! IF A BUM WANTS TO SELL US SOME OF HIS BLOOD, HE'S GOT A PERFECT RIGHT TO... AND WE'VE GOT A PERFECT RIGHT TO BUY IT..
I'LL PACK THE DAYS TAKE AND YOU CAN BRING IT UPTOWN!
LATER... UPTOWN AT A 'LEGITIMATE' BLOOD-BANK...
NINETEEN PINTS, HERB! THAT'S FIVE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY BUCKS...
BOY, YOU GUYS CERTAINLY ARE CASHIN' IN ON THOSE POOR BOOZE BLOSS DOWN-TOWN
SO WHAT!? YOU'RE MAKIN' TEN BUCKS A PINT YOURSELF, HERB! THE HOSPITALS PAY YOU FORTY BUCKS A PINT! AND IT'S GRAVY! WE DO ALL THE WORK!
I'M NOT COMPLAININ', WARREN! I'D PAY A PRIVATE DONOR WHAT I PAY YOU! I'M NOT COMPLAININ'!
MEANWHILE, ON THE BOWERY, WOBO WAS SPREADING...
TEN BUCKS!! JUSH LIKE THAT! ALL YOU DO ISH GO THERE.. AN' THEY SHTICK A NEEDLE IN YOUR ARM....
.. AN' YOU LAY THERE... AN' THEN YOU'RE FINISHED.. AND THEY GIVE YOU THE DOUGH!
WHATSHA NUMBER OF THE JOINT... HUH?

IT WAS LIKE TAKING CANDY FROM BABIES, THE WAY CAL AND WARREN COLLECTED PINTS OF BLOOD FROM THE POOR DRUNKARDS, ALCOHOLICS, DERELICTS, AND OTHER UNFORTUNATES WHO HUNG ARDUND THE BOWERY! AND TO THE UNFORTUNATES, IT WAS EASY MONEY. .ANOTHER WEEK OF EXISTING...ANOTHER BOTTLE OR TWO
I WANNA GIVE A PINT OF BLOOD! I.. I COULD USE TH' MONEY!
DIDN'T YOU GIVE A PINT ALREADY? YOU LOOK FAMILIAR!
WHO? ME? NOT ME! MUSTA BEEN SOME OTHER GUY! NOT ME!
ALL RIGHT! LIE ON THE COT!
AND SO THEY STARTED TO COME BACK...TIME AND AGAIN, WHENEVER THEIR TEN DOLLARS WOULD RUN OUT TO GIVE ANOTHER PINT.. TO BUY ANOTHER QUART.
WARREN! THERE'S A BUM OUT THERE WHO'S GIVEN THREE TIMES THIS MONTH ALREADY!
SO WHAT?! IF HE WANTS TO KILL HIMSELF, IT AIN'T MY AFFAIR, IS IT? BESIDES
WHO'S GONNA MISS HIM WHEN HE CROAKS, ANYWAY? HUH? GO AHEAD! TAKE IT FROM HIM!
I..I... WELL, ALL RIGHT, WARREN! JUST AS YOU SAY
THE MONEY ROLLED IN FOR WARREN AND CAL...
HE'S OUT COLD!
TAKE AN EXTRA PINT! HE'LL NEVER KNOW...
AND THEN...
ALL RIGHT! STAND BACK! STAND BACK! GIVE HIM AIR!
ISH TOMMY! WASH WRONG WISH 'IM?
THIS MAN IS DEAD!

HEE,HEE! SO TRAGEDY FINALLY STRUCK! ONE OF THE POOR UNFORTUNATES, WHO'D GIVEN TOO MUCH OF THE PRECIOUS FLUID THAT FLOWED THROUGH HIS VEINS, HAD DIED! NOW THE BOWERY DERELICTS WERE *FRIGHTENED!* CAL AND WARREN'S LITTLE OFFICE WAS EMPTY..

HOW ABOUT IT, BUDDY? TEN BUCKS

NOT *ME*, MISTER! I DON'T WANT TO END UP LIKE *TOMMY!* ON A *SLAB*..IN THE *MORGUE!*

CAL AND WARREN BECAME DESPERATE..

WHAT'LL WE *DO*, WARREN? NOBODY WANTS TO GIVE *BLOOD* ANYMORE! THEY'RE *SCARED!*

THEN WE'LL GO OUT AND *GET* 'IM, CAL! C'MON!

AND SO, CAL AND WARREN, UNDER THE COVER OF DARKNESS, BEGAN TO SEARCH THE BACK ALLEYS AND EMPTY LOTS AROUND SKID ROW..

HERE COMES ONE *NOW*... HIGHER THAN A *KITE!*

QUIET! WAIT UNTIL HE GETS *UP* TO US... THEN.

CLUNK!

THEY CARRIED THEIR SHANGHAIED VICTIM BACK TO THE LOFT BUILDING..

EASY, NOW! PUT HIM ON THE COT!

I DON'T *LIKE* THIS WARREN!

STOP YOUR *WORRYING*, CAL! HE WON'T *REMEMBER* IF HE CAME HERE UNDER HIS *OWN STEAM* OR *NOT!* AFTER YOU'RE *THROUGH* TAKING HIS BLOOD SLIP A *FIVE SPOT* IN HIS *POCKET* THEN WE'LL *DITCH* HIM..

OKAY! BUT I *STILL* DON'T LIKE IT!

HEE, HEE! NICE GUYS, CAL AND WARREN, EH, KIDDIES? WHEN THE DOWN-AND-OUTERS WOULDN'T COME TO THEM, THEY WENT OUT AND GOT 'EM! OF COURSE, BUSINESS WASN'T AS GOOD AS IT WAS BEFORE.. BUT IT WAS BETTER THAN NOTHING!
SIX PINTS?! IS THAT ALL? WHAT'S UP, WARREN? THE SUMS RUN OUT OF BLOOD?
JUST GIVE ME THE DOUGH, HERS, AND FORGET THE CRACKS!
FINALLY.. ONE EVENING.. AS IT WAS GROWING DARK
ONLY ONE BUM CAME IN TODAY, WARREN!
C'MON! LET'S GO OUT AND SHANGHAI A FEW!
AND SO, IN THE GATHERING SHADOWS, WARREN AND CAL STARTED DOWN THE RICKETY STAIRS OF THE LOFT BUILDING
HEY! LOOK! THAT DOOR, IT'S OPEN!
I NEVER KNEW ANYBODY ELSE WAS IN THIS BUILDING! HELLO IN THERE..
NO ANSWER! ONLY THE PATTER OF TINY FEET AS A GREY SHADOW SCURRIED ACROSS THE FLOOR..
WHAT'S THAT, WARREN? IN THAT BOX..?
LOOKS LIKE A BUM! HE'S EITHER SLEEPING OR HE'S OUT COLD!
HEY, BUDDY! HEY! WAKE UP!
HE'S SOUSED! C'MON! GIVE ME A HAND! WE CERTAINLY DIDN'T HAVE TO TRAVEL FAR FOR OUR FIRST SUCKER OF THE EVENING!
THEY LIFTED THE UNCONSCIOUS FIGURE FROM THE WOODEN BOX AND CARRIED HIM OUT OF THE LOFT AND UP THE RICKETY STAIRS TO THEIR OWN OFFICE...
UGH! THIS GUY IS HEAVY!
HE'LL BE GOOD FOR THREE PINTS AT LEAST!

BUT THEY NEVER NOTICED THE THIN LAYER OF SOIL IN THE BOTTOM OF THE BOX WHERE THEIR LATEST VICTIM HAD BEEN LYING...
AND JUST AS THE SUN SET BEYOND THE PALISADES, AS THEY PUT HIM DOWN ON THE SOILED COT...
I'LL LOCK THE DOOR! YOU START SETTING UP THE EQUIPMENT..
OKAY!
...HE OPENED HIS EYES! HIS GLOWING RED EYES...
GASP!
HUH? S'MATTER! GOOD LORD!
HE SPRANG FROM THE COT.. HIS LIPS DRAWN BACK.. REVEALING WHITE, RAZOR-SHARP FANGS...
WARREN! OH, LORD.. IT'S...A... VAAAAAHH!
...AND THE MUSTY OLD LOFT BUILDING WAS FILLED WITH HYSTERICAL SHRIEKS AS THE VAMPIRE ATTACKED.
EEE EEEEE'AAAAGH
WHEN THE POLICE FINALLY CAME TO INVESTIGATE THE HORRIBLE SCREAMS THAT HAD EMANATED FROM THE EMPTY LOFT BUILDING, THEY FOUND WARREN AND CAL... THEIR EYES BULGING IN THEIR BLUE FACES
DEAD... EVERY DROP OF BLOOD'S BEEN DRAINED FROM THEIR BODIES!
HEE, HEE! SO WARREN AND CAL, WHO'D BEEN TAKING BLOOD FROM THE POOR DERELICTS OR SKID ROW, ENDED UP WITHOUT ANY THEMSELVES! OF COURSE, THE POLICE NEVER FOUND THE VAMPIRE! AFTER ALL! WHO BELIEVES IN VAMPIRES, ANYWAY? HEE, HEE! DO YOU? BY THE WAY! I'VE GOT A LARGE WOODEN BOX HERE IN THE 'HAUNT'! I'D- ER...LIKE TO GET RID OF IT! GOT AN ADDRESS YOU'D LIKE IT SHIPPED TO? I'LL MAKE SURE IT ARRIVES JUST ABOUT SUN-DOWN! HEE, HEE! BYE NOW! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG, THE HAUNT OF FEAR, SO LOOK FOR US...EH?

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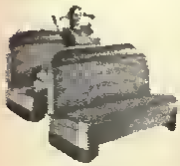

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"Scram! You SKINNY Scarecrow!

the boys shouted at me
ONLY A FEW WEEKS AGO!

"I was a SKINNY, scared, girl-shy skeleton. Now I feel and look great. Pal, do as I did, right NOW! Mail the Coupon below.

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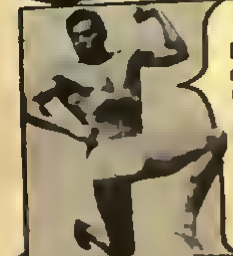
But look at me now —an All-American Jowett Champion"—says John Sill, Utah, who like millions, mailed me 10c and a coupon like the one below YOU MAIL NOW!



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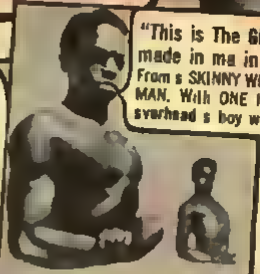


Jobie Jackson NOW!!! Jobie Jackson Only 90 DAYS ago!

"This is The GREAT CHANGE You made in me in 90 DAYS! From a SKINNY WEAKLING to a MIGHTY MAN. With ONE hand I can now lift overhead a boy weighing 145 pounds. I can bend a 1½ inch IRON BAR around my neck. Jowett gives you muscle quality as well as quantity." Yours, Jobie Jackson Jr. ARKANSAS

MAN! aren't YOU as SICK and TIRED as I and thousands of MIGHTY JOWETT HE-MEN were OF being SKINNY?

Then, Come on, Pal, do as they did!
Give me 10 Pleasant Minutes a Day
and I'll give YOU a NEW HE-MAN BODY
for your OLD SKELETON FRAME.

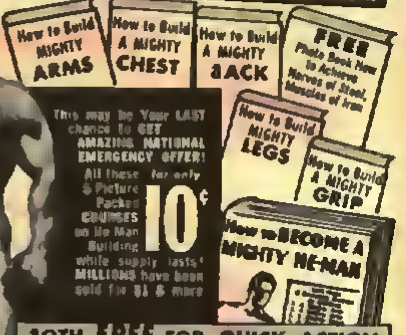
NO! I don't care how skinny or flabby you are; If you're a teen-ager, in your 20's or 30's or over; if you're short or tall, or what work you do. All I want is to MAKE YOU OVER by the SAME METHOD I turned myself from a wreck to a Champion of Champions.

YES! You'll see INCH upon INCH of MIGHTY MUSCLE added to YOUR ARMS. Your CHEST deepened Your BACK AND SHOULDERS broadened. From head to heels, you'll gain SOLIDITY, SIZE, POWER, SPEED! You'll become an ALL-Around, ALL-American HE-MAN, a WINNER in everything you tackle—or my Training won't cost you one single cent!

Develop YOUR 520 MUSCLES
Gain Pounds, INCHES, FAST!

Friend I've traveled the world. Made a LIFETIME STUDY of every way known to develop your body. Then I devised the BEST by TEST, my "5-WAY PROGRESSIVE POWER" the only method that builds you 5-ways fast. You save YEARS, DOLLARS like movie star Tom Tyler did. Like Champ Roger Hirsch Like MANY THOUSANDS like you did SO

George F Jowett Whom experts call "Champion of Champions"



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A READY-TO-FLY JET AIRPLANE

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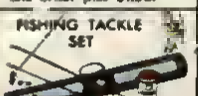

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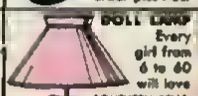

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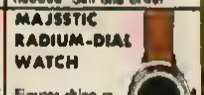

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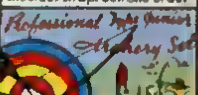

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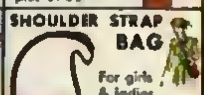

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